



FACULTEIT DER GEESTESWETENSCHAPPEN  
*Afdeling Theologie en Religiestudies*

**HISTORY OF HERMETIC PHILOSOPHY  
AND RELATED CURRENTS**

**REPORT 2002**



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## 1. Introduction

In the year 2002, the subdepartment “Geschiedenis van de Hermetische Filosofie en verwante stromingen” (GHF) has expanded its teaching program with a series of courses in English, as part of the introduction in the Dutch universities of the new “BA/MA” (Bachelor/Master) system. In this report we give an overview of the recent development of the subdepartment, its new projects, and its plans for the future.

## 2. Personnel

Dr. Jean-Pierre Brach (lecturer/researcher “Renaissance-18<sup>th</sup> Century” since 1 september 2000) successfully applied for the vacant position of Directeur d’Études for “Courants ésoteriques dans l’Europe moderne et contemporaine” at the 5<sup>th</sup> section (Sciences Religieuses) of the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Sorbonne) in Paris. His appointment, as the successor of Antoine Faivre, has taken effect on 1 september 2002. For the staff members of GHF, Brach’s appointment as full professor in Paris means the loss of a cherished colleague; but this loss is mitigated by the fact that the excellent collaboration that already existed between the world’s two academic chairs for Western esotericism will no doubt be continued in the years to come. We congratulate Jean-Pierre with this well-deserved position, and wish to express our appreciation for his important contributions to GHF during the first years of its existence. Brach spontaneously agreed to continue coming to Amsterdam on a one-day-a-week basis for the duration of the first semester of the academic year 2002-2003, to help the subdepartment through the interim period between his departure and the arrival of his successor. This too has been greatly appreciated.

In response to an advertisement circulated by means of internet, email media, and available mailing lists of scholars in the field, twenty candidates applied for Brach’s succession. A committee of five members, chaired by W.J. Hanegraaff, selected three candidates for a personal interview. The committee unanimously decided to appoint Dr. Kocku von Stuckrad (Germany).



Dr. K. von Stuckrad (1966) studied Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Jewish Studies at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne. Since 1997 he has been lecturer Religious Studies at the University of Bremen, and from April 2002 visiting Professor at the University of Bayreuth. He is the author of many articles, and six books including *Das Ringen um die Astrologie: Jüdische und christliche Beiträge zum antiken Zeitverständnis* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter 2000), *Geschichte der Astrologie: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: C. H. Beck forthcoming 2003) and *Schamanismus und Esoterik: Kultur- und wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Betrachtungen* (Leuven: Peeters forthcoming 2003).

Dr. Von Stuckrad has been appointed, as of 1 April 2003, as lecturer/researcher “Western Esotericism in the Early Modern Period”.

The same committee also conducted a job interview with Mss. Drs. Roelie van Kreijl, as part of the current selection procedure for a Ph.D. research associate (“Onderzoeker in Opleiding”, or AIO) for the period 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century. The committee decided to appoint Mss. Van Kreijl, who therefore joins Marieke van den Doel as GHF’s second Ph.D. research associate.

Mss. R. van Kreijl (1974) studied Religious Studies at the Universiteit van Amsterdam. She completed her graduate studies in 2002, with a thesis called “Wetenschappelijke religie en religieuze wetenschap”, on the debate between anthroposophical and “regular” medicine. She has been appointed for the period 1 March 2003 to 1 March 2007, to work on a research project entitled “Het historische en actuele debat tussen ‘para-paracelsistische’ en ‘reguliere’ geneeskunde: Een historische en sociaal-wetenschappelijke analyse” (The historical and current debate between “para-paracelsist” and “regular” medicine: A historical and social-scientific analysis)

### **3. Teaching**

#### **3.1. Teaching Program**

The minor “Westerse esoterie” has been continued without major changes. “Hermetica I” was given by Hanegraaff; Hermetica II by Brach; and Hermetica III by Hammer. In addition, Hammer taught the general propaedeutic course “Inleiding Religies van de wereld”.

In the first semester of the academic year 2002-2003, the first courses belonging to the new MA program “Mysticism and Western Esotericism” (see annual report over 2001) were taught: “Renaissance Esotericism I” by Jean-Pierre Brach, and “Western Esotericism and the Quest for Enlightenment” by Wouter Hanegraaff. As expected (since national and international publicity campaigns for the MA programs at the Faculty of Humanities have started only in the spring of 2003) the number of students in this first year, in the GHF programs as in other Religious Studies courses, was still rather small; for the next years a



considerable increase in student numbers is expected. The students' commitment was impressive, so that it proved possible to attain the high academic level expected of teaching on the MA level.

### **3.2. Level of participation**

The general pattern remains the same. The introductory course Hermetic I continues to attract an average of 40-45 students, spread over a daytime and an evening course; and like in the previous years, it again attracted a relatively large amount of contract students. A smaller but significant part of these students continues to follow Hermetica II and III, and a few of them move on to the MA level as well.

## **4. Research**

### **4.1. Research Program**

For a complete description of the research program "Western Esotericism and Modernization (coord. W.J. Hanegraaff) and its subprograms, the reader is referred to the Annual Report 1999-2000.

Mss. R. van Kreijl has joined the program with a new project:

*The historical and current debate between "para-paracelsist" and "regular" medicine: A historical and social-scientific analysis*

This project investigates what is the structure and the nature of the arguments used by representatives of three related "para-paracelsist" medical-esoteric systems (homeopathy, spagyrics, and anthroposophical medicine), on the one hand, and by their opponents in "regular" medicine, on the other, in their attempts to defend their own approach and falsify the one of their opponents. By looking at the debates in the founding period of the three currents and in the present period, it will be possible to decide whether the arguments have changed over time (for example as a result of new scientific developments), and if so, how they have changed.

*Lodovico Lazzarelli and Giovanni "Mercurio" da Correggio* (W.J. Hanegraaff)

The manuscript has been accepted (as the first manuscript by a non-American author in the history of the series) for publication by "Arizona Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies" (Phoenix, Arizona).



The project on Anthroposophy has been replaced by a new one:

*Charismatic Leadership in Esoteric Sacred Biographies* (O. Hammer)

In Weber's theory of leadership, the well-known concept of routinization of charisma implies the transfer of ascribed status from the leader to the system. Nevertheless, the charismatic qualities attributed to the leader continue to be a source of narrative reflection in various forms of discourse that center on the life of the founding figure and his or her extraordinary qualities. In written material such as full-scale biographies, biographical articles and promotional material, as well as in the process of oral narration, these leaders are continually reconstructed as icons of spiritual power. The primary empirical material analyzed consists of biographical material on four nineteenth century and early twentieth century figures: Helena Blavatsky, Rudolf Steiner, George Gurdjieff and Aleister Crowley. Taking its methodological inspiration primarily from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), the present project attempts to unravel the construction of charisma that permeates such biographical narratives and to set these discursive mechanisms in a comparative and theoretical perspective. The results will be published in the form of a monograph as well as in articles in scholarly journals.

#### **4.2. Research Output.**

W.J. Hanegraaff

'Versuch über Friederike Hauffe: Zum Verhältnis zwischen Lebensgeschichte und Mythos der "Seherin von Prevorst"', Teil II, *Suevica* 10.

'The New Age Movement', in: Linda Woodhead et al. (Ed.), *Religion in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations*, London: Routledge, 249-263,

"'Iedereen heeft gelijk': Frank Visser's analyse van Ken Wilber', *Hervormd Nederland* 58:1/2, 28-30.

'Kosmische rechtvaardigheid: De westerse leer van reïncarnatie', *De bazuin* 85:3, 16-19.

Steven Sutcliffe & Marion Bowman (eds.), *Beyond New Age: Exploring Alternative Spirituality*, Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh (2000). Review in *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 17:1, 125-126.

J.-P. Brach



‘Sur quelques notations arithmologiques dans le *Colloquium Heptaplomeres*’, in: Karl Friedrich Faltenbacher (ed.), *Magie, Religion und Wissenschaften im Colloquium heptaplomeres* (Proceedings of the Paris 1994 and Villa Vigoni/Como 1999 Conferences), Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Mainz, 157-61.

### O. Hammer

‘Har du sett Gud?’, in: *Föreningen lärare i religionshistoria årsbok* 34, 34-50.

B. J. Gibbons, *Spirituality and the Occult*, Routledge: London 2000. Review in *Aries* 2:1, 99-102.

Ursula King, *Spirituality and Society in the New Millennium*, Sussex Academic Press: Brighton & Portland 2001. Review in *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 17:2, 278-279.

Hans Thomas Hakl, *Der verborgene Geist von Eranos. Unbekannte Begegnungen von Wissenschaft und Esoterik. Eine alternative Geistesgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Bretten: Scientia Nova 2001. Review in *Aries* 2:2, 226-229.

Kirsten Marie Bovbjerg, *Følsomhedens etik. Tilpasning af personligheden i New Age og moderne management*, Hovedland: Højbjerg 2001. Review in *Chaos* 37, 176-178.

Mikael Rothstein, *Gud er (stadig) blå* Gyldendal: Copenhagen 2002. Review in *Chaos* 37, 178-179.

## **5. Further Activities**

### **5.1. Lectures and Congress Participation**

Hanegraaff lectured at two international conferences (Pforzheim, Aups) and two Dutch ones (Heeze, Utrecht); he was invited for lectures at two universities (Sweet Briar, Heidelberg); and he gave a popular talk in Amsterdam. Brach lectured at two international conferences (Pforzheim, Cerisy-la-Salle). And Hammer lectured at an international conference in Århus and gave invited lectures in Gothenburg and Amsterdam.

### W.J. Hanegraaff

Conference “Secrecy, History, and Publics”, Sweet Briar College (Virginia, USA), 17 March (lecture ‘Are there Secrets in Swedenborg’s “Secrets of Heaven”?’).



Invited lecture Pforzheim (Germany), Conference “Reuchlin und seine Erben: Forscher, Denker, Ideologen und Spinner”, Pforzheim (Germany), 22 June (lecture ‘Swedenborg, the Jews, and Jewish Traditions’).

University of Heidelberg (Germany), Graduiertenkolleg “Religion und Normativität”, 17 June (lecture ‘The Hermetic Christ in the Streets of Rome’).

3rd Conference of the Palladian Academy, Aups (France), 25 June (lecture ‘Paradigms in the Study of Western Esotericism’).

N.G.G.-Conference “De toekomst van de godsdienstwetenschap in Nederland: Taken en verantwoordelijkheden”, Heeze, 11 May (lezing ‘De toekomst van de godsdienstwetenschap in Nederland’)

DGO-conferentie, Utrecht, 13 December (lezing ‘Van Theologie naar Godsdienstwetenschap’).

CREA/Studium generale cycle “De zeven hoofdzonden en de taal van de moraal”, Amsterdam, 16 April (lecture ‘Onkuisheid: De zuivere zonde’).

#### J.-P. Brach

Conference “Reuchlin und seine Erben: Forscher, Denker, Ideologen und Spinner”. Pforzheim (Germany), 21 June (lecture ‘Outlines and Motivations of Guillaume Postel’s Interest in Jewish Language and Culture’).

Conference “Raymond Abellio aujourd’hui”, Cerisy-la-Salle (France), 2 September (lecture ‘La symbolique des nombres chez R. Abellio’).

#### O. Hammer

Conference “New Religions and Globalization”, Århus (Denmark), 25 september (lecture ‘Purity and Mixture: Religious Plurality and the Domestication of Alterity’).

Lecture series “Contemporary religions in the West”, Gothenburg (Sweden), 25 october (lecture ‘Cognitive and Social Aspects of Religious Experience’).

Popular science series on rituals, Amsterdam, 3 october (lecture ‘Doing Things the Rite Way’).





## 5.2. Editorial Activities

During the period of discussion the GHF staff members have been involved as editors in a number of journals, book projects and series

### Wouter J. Hanegraaff :

- Editor (with R. Edighoffer and A. Faivre) of *Aries: Journal for the Study of Western Esotericism* (publ.: E.J. Brill, Leiden/Boston/Köln)
- Editor (with J.-P. Brach, R. van den Broek, A. Faivre) of *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (forthcoming with E.J. Brill, Leiden/Boston/Köln)
- General Editor of “Studies in the History of Religions (*Numen* Book Series)” (publ.: E.J. Brill, Leiden/Boston/Köln)
- Editor (with G.W. Trompf) of “Gnostica: Texts & Interpretations” (publ.: Peeters, Louvain)
- Member editorial board of *Esoterica* [www.esoteric.msu.edu](http://www.esoteric.msu.edu)
- Member European editorial board of *Religion* (publ.: Academic Press)
- Member editorial board of *Journal of Contemporary Religion* (publ.: Carfax)
- Member board of editorial consultants of *Nova Religio* (publ.: Seven Bridges Press)

### Jean-Pierre Brach:

- Editor of *Politica Hermetica* (publ.: L’Âge d’Homme)
- Editor (with R. van den Broek, A. Faivre, W.J. Hanegraaff) of *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism* (publ.: E.J. Brill, Leiden/Boston/Köln)
- Member editorial board of *Aries* (representative French-speaking countries)
- Member editorial board of *Esoterica* [www.esoteric.msu.edu](http://www.esoteric.msu.edu)

### Olav Hammer:

- Member editorial board of *Aries* (representative Scandinavian countries)



## **6. New and Current Projects**

All projects described in the Report 2001 have been continued in 2002.

## **8. Varia**

Dr. H. Bogdan (Sweden), a Ph.D. candidate working on Freemasonry, has spent most of the first half of 2002 at GHF. Purpose of his stay was to profit from discussion with staff members and attend some courses.



## APPENDIX

### GHF courses in Studiegids 2003-2004

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#### Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)

Studielaast:	10
Semester:	1 (voltijd)
Onderdeel:	Bachelor Religiestudies
Docent:	prof.dr. W.J. Hanegraaff
Ingangseis:	5 propedeusevakken
Inhoud:	Deze module biedt een historisch overzicht van de ontwikkeling van “westers-esoterische” religieuze stromingen binnen het laat antieke hellenisme, de christelijke cultuur en de moderne samenleving. Hierbij zal de nadruk liggen op de ontwikkelingen van de Renaissance tot op heden (vanaf de opleving van de “hermetische filosofie” in de tweede helft van de vijftiende eeuw tot en met de New Age beweging in de huidige samenleving). De module heeft tot doel, inzicht te verschaffen in zowel de samenhang als de historische diversiteit van Westers-esoterische religiositeit. Speciale aandacht zal worden besteed aan de vraag hoe deze vormen van religie zich verhouden tot de maatschappelijk dominante stromingen van Christendom en moderniteit.
Onderwijsvorm:	Hoorcollege
College-uren:	1x3 uren per week
Studie-materiaal:	Verplicht: Frances A. Yates, <i>Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition</i> , London & Chicago 1964; Joscelyn Godwin, <i>The Theosophical Enlightenment</i> , Albany 1994, alsmede een serie artikelen. De literatuurlijst en het leesrooster zijn vanaf een maand voor aanvang van de module te downloaden op <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl</a> (sectie Current Students: Current BA Courses).
Toetsvorm:	Schriftelijk tentamen met open vragen.
Kosten:	Ca. €85,--

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#### Westerse esoterie in de vroeg-moderne periode (Hermetica II)

Studielaast:	10
Semester:	2 (voltijd)
Onderdeel:	Bachelor Religiestudies
Ingangseis:	een propedeuse; Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)
Docent:	Dr. K. von Stuckrad
Inhoud:	Deze cursus gaat dieper in op de geschiedenis van de Westese esoterie in de vroeg-moderne periode (vijftiende-achttiende eeuw) door middel van close reading van representatieve primaire bronnen (waar nodig in vertaling) en discussie van een selectie van secundaire bronnen. Het gedachtegoed in kwestie wordt getraceerd binnen Joodse, Christelijke,



	Islamitische, en “pagane” en Hermetische tradities, met als methodologisch uitgangspunt de gedachte dat vroeg-moderne esoterie slechts kan worden begrepen vanuit een bredere culturele en sociale context, met aandacht voor de problematiek van religieuze pluraliteit. Ieder jaar staat een bepaald thema centraal, dat een maand voor aanvang van de module wordt bekend gemaakt (zie onder “studiemateriaal”). Een werkbezoek aan de <i>Bibliotheca Philosophica Hermetica</i> maakt onderdeel uit van het programma. Van studenten wordt verwacht dat zij actief deelnemen in de discussie, een mondelinge presentatie verzorgen, en een paper schrijven gebaseerd op kritische analyse van primaire en secundaire bronnen
Onderwijsvorm:	Werkgroep.
College-uren:	1x3 uren per week.
Studiemateriaal:	De literatuurlijst, het programma, en informatie over het centrale thema zijn vanaf een maand voor aanvang van de module te downloaden op <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl</a> (sectie Current Students: Current BA Courses).
Toetsvorm:	Mondelinge presentatie en schriftelijk paper.
Voertaal:	Nederlands en Engels.
Kosten:	Ca. €60,--.

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### **Westerse esoterie sinds de Verlichting (Hermetica III)**

Studielast:	10
Semester:	1 (voltijd)
Onderdeel:	Bachelor Religiestudies
Ingangseis:	een propedeuse; Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)
Docent:	Dr. O. Hammer
Inhoud:	Deze cursus gaat dieper in op de geschiedenis van de Westerse esoterie sinds de achttiende eeuw, met als centraal thema “religieuze ervaring”. De thematiek van persoonlijke spirituele ervaring staat centraal in vele religieuze tradities in verleden en heden, en esoterische stromingen leggen veelal een sterke nadruk op het belang ervan. Dergelijke ervaringen kunnen variëren van relatief alledaags (zoals het interpreteren van schijnbare coïncidenties als betekenisvolle synchroniciteiten), via veranderde bewustzijnstoestanden (bijvoorbeeld opgewekt door meditatie) tot onalledaagse piekervaringen (met “mystieke ervaring” als paradigmatisch voorbeeld). Religieuze ervaring is in toenemende mate object geworden van wetenschappelijk onderzoek, binnen contexten als religiestudies, filosofie, psychologie, cognitiewetenschappen, sociologie en neurologie. Deze module stelt zich tot doel, een beeld te krijgen van de complexiteit en veelvormigheid van deze benaderingen, en ze kritisch toe te passen op historische en hedendaagse voorbeelden van Westers-esoterische religiositeit.
Onderwijsvorm:	Werkgroep.
College-uren:	1x3 uren per week.



Studiemateriaal:	De literatuurlijst, het programma, en informatie over het centrale thema zijn vanaf een maand voor aanvang van de module te downloaden op <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.nl</a> (sectie Current Students: Current BA Courses).
Toetsvorm:	Mondelinge presentatie en schriftelijk paper.
Voertaal:	Nederlands.
Kosten:	Ca. €50,--.

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### **Introductie religiestudies**

Studielast:	10
Semester:	1 (voltijd)
Onderdeel:	Bachelor Religiestudies
Ingangseis:	Geen
Docent:	Dr. O. Hammer
Inhoud:	Deze module heeft een dubbele doelstelling: het leveren van basisinformatie over een aantal van de belangrijkste religies, en een introductie tot de terminologie en de methodiek van de religiewetenschap. Speciale aandacht zal worden besteed aan religieuze tradities die uitdrukkelijk niet aan de orde komen in latere modules van de BA religiestudies, d.w.z. aan religies buiten de sfeer van christendom, jodendom en islam. De nadruk zal liggen op religies in de hedendaagse wereld, en in dit verband zal tevens worden ingegaan op de opkomst van seculiere wereldbeelden in de westerse wereld. Er zal verder aandacht worden besteed aan een aantal onderwerpen die relevant zijn over de grenzen van afzonderlijke religies heen, zoals religie en politiek, religie en gender, en religieuze globaliseringsprocessen.
Onderwijsvorm:	Hoorcollege
College-uren:	2x2 uren per week.
Studiemateriaal:	Linda Woodhead (ed.), <i>Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations</i> , London 2001.
Toetsvorm:	Schriftelijk tentamen met open vragen.
Kosten:	Ca. €50,--

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### **Renaissance Esotericism II: Religious Plurality and Esoteric Discourse**

Studielast:	10
Semester:	1
Onderdeel:	Master Religious Studies
Ingangseis:	Propaedeutics. Bachelor “Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)” or extracurricular reading (see: <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com</a> , section Prospective Students: MA Program, paragraph “Introductory Reading”).
Docent:	Dr. K. von Stuckrad



Inhoud:	Quite against a common assumption, European history of religions is not the history of Christianity and its confessional denominations. The history of esotericism is a particularly good example to show the interaction and the transfer of semantics between the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian traditions. Furthermore, late-antique Neoplatonism, Hermetism, and polytheistic traditions have been a strong element of early modern religious discourse. In this course, we will discuss theoretical approaches to religious plurality and apply these to esoteric currents from the 15th through the 17th century. Paradigmatic primary sources will be read (in original or translation) and analyzed. In addition, we will focus on important persons of the Renaissance period who stand on the interface of different religious traditions.
Onderwijsvorm:	Seminar
College-uren:	1x3 hours a week.
Studiemateriaal:	The reading list and course program will be downloadable at least four weeks before the start of the course, from <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com</a> (section Current Students, subsection Current MA Program)
Toetsvorm:	Public presentation and written paper.
Kosten:	Ca. €60,--
Voertaal:	English

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## **Western Esotericism and the Quest for Enlightenment II: Spiritual Techniques and Experiential Phenomena**

Studielaast:	10
Semester:	1
Onderdeel:	Master Religious Studies
Ingangseis:	Propaedeutics. Bachelor “Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)” or extracurricular reading (see: <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com</a> , (section Prospective Students: MA Program, paragraph “Introductory Reading”).
Docent:	Prof. Dr. W.J. Hanegraaff
Inhoud:	Western esotericism cannot be understood only in terms of beliefs and worldviews. Its adherents often refer to unusual spiritual experiences and “wondrous events”, and they have developed specific techniques for gaining access to a superior “knowledge” (gnosis) and other levels of reality. In this course we will investigate specific examples of such techniques and reported experiences, and apply to them theories and models developed in the study of religion and the social sciences.
Onderwijsvorm:	Seminar
College-uren:	1x3 hours a week.
Studiemateriaal:	The reading list and course program will be downloadable at least four weeks before the start of the course, from <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com</a> (section Current Students, subsection Current MA Program)
Toetsvorm:	Public presentation and written paper.
Kosten:	Ca. €60,--



Voertaal: English

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## **Occult Trajectories II: Charisma in 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century esotericism**

Studielast: 10  
Semester: 2  
Onderdeel: Master Religious Studies  
Ingangseis: Propaedeutics. Bachelor “Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)” or extracurricular reading (see: <http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com>, (section Prospective Students: MA Program, paragraph “Introductory Reading”).

Docent: Dr. O. Hammer  
Inhoud: Esoteric currents in the post-Enlightenment age have often taken institutional forms: organizations centered around individual, charismatic leaders. The exalted status of these leaders continues long after their deaths, and is reconstructed in written and oral narratives – a genre often referred to as sacred biographies. This course has three related aims. It will acquaint students with the biographies of leaders of a broad range of nineteenth and twentieth esoteric movements, including those representing magical, theosophical and post-theosophical as well as traditionalist directions. It will engage students in critical reflection on various theories of charisma and charismatic leadership, from the foundational texts by Max Weber to present-day scholarship. Finally, it will focus on the interplay between history and myth-making in the formation of sacred biography.

Onderwijsvorm: Seminar  
College-uren: 1x3 hours a week.  
Studiemateriaal: The reading list and course program will be downloadable at least four weeks before the start of the course, from <http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com> (section Current Students, subsection Current MA Program)

Toetsvorm: Public presentation and written paper.  
Kosten: Ca. €60,--  
Voertaal: English

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## **Western Esotericism and (post)modernity**

Studielast: 10  
Semester: 1  
Onderdeel: Master Religious Studies  
Ingangseis: Propaedeutics. Bachelor “Westerse esoterie (Hermetica I)” or extracurricular reading (see: <http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com>, (section Prospective Students: MA Program, paragraph “Introductory Reading”).

Docent: Prof. Dr. W.J. Hanegraaff  
Inhoud: In this course we will study how processes of modernization have influenced the development of Western esoteric currents, and how the



study of those currents may lead to new perspectives on the general development of Western society. In studying successive processes of “modernization” and their impact on esotericism, some important focuses of attention will be the rise of protestantism, the scientific revolution, the Enlightenment, the industrial revolution, the rise of democracy, the development of an international market economy, and the various aspects of a “postmodern” mentality. By studying Western esotericism in the context of modernization it becomes clear how closely intellectual history is interwoven with social history, and how complex is the relation between continuity and change.

Onderwijsvorm:	Seminar
College-uren:	1x3 hours a week.
Studiemateriaal:	The reading list and course program will be downloadable at least four weeks before the start of the course, from <a href="http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com">http://www.amsterdamhermetica.com</a> (section Current Students, subsection Current MA Program)
Toetsvorm:	Public presentation and written paper.
Kosten:	Ca. €60,--
Voertaal:	English